

> First ever joint obsolete pesticide and animal health products collection in Manitoba a success

April 15, 2013 – Etobicoke, ON – Manitoba farmers returned almost 75,000 kilograms of obsolete pesticides and 340 kilograms of food animal medications for safe disposal last year in a first-of-its kind joint collection program.

CleanFARMS, a national industry-led agricultural waste stewardship organization, has run an obsolete pesticide collection program twice before in the province but last year it partnered with the Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI) to include food animal medications for the first time.

“It’s always a good thing when we can offer expanded programs to help farmers responsibly manage waste on their farms. Partnering with the Canadian Animal Health Institute was a big success and we hope to build on this in the future,” says Barry Friesen, general manager of CleanFARMS.

Farmers were invited to participate in the program, at no charge, by dropping off their obsolete or unwanted agricultural pesticides and food animal medications over a three day-period at 20 collection sites throughout the province in October.

“Members of the Canadian Animal Health Institute were pleased to partner with CleanFARMS in their recent collection of obsolete pesticides, which was expanded to include expired and un-used food animal medications. This pilot demonstrated that a simple, one-stop collection point for both pesticides and animal medications is a valuable service that we can offer to farmers,” said Jean Szkotnicki, President CAHI.

Funding for this program was also provided by the Manitoba Conservation Sustainable Development Innovation Fund (SDIF) and the Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Agricultural Sustainability Initiative (ASI) Fund.

Since 1998, Manitoba farmers have returned almost 220,000 kilograms of obsolete pesticides. After collection, the pesticides are taken to a licensed waste management facility where they are safely disposed through high-temperature incineration. “We support this important program, and we promote it extensively,” said Doug Chorney, president of Keystone Agricultural Producers, one of the program partners. “The overwhelming uptake by Manitoba farmers is an indication of their commitment to sustainable farming practices.”

The obsolete pesticide collection program generally comes to the province every three years. In between collections, farmers are encouraged to safely store their unwanted pesticides until they can properly dispose of them through the obsolete pesticide collection program.

The CleanFARMS obsolete pesticide collection program is part of the plant science industry’s commitment to responsible lifecycle management of its products.

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> Backgrounder

The obsolete pesticide collection program was launched by industry in 1998 as part of its commitment to the responsible lifecycle management of its products. In 2010, CleanFARMS was formed to manage industry-funded agricultural waste management programs, including the obsolete pesticide collection program.

What are pesticides?

Pesticides are substances registered by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) that are used to control pest pressures, including fungi, insects and weeds, that can cause damage to crops.

What kinds of products are collected?

We collect all liquid and dry granular commercially labeled pesticides. They come in all sizes and types of containers from as small as 250 millilitres up to 500 litre totes. They can also include products delivered in multi-walled paper and plastic bags. The products are mainly for farm use but may also include obsolete pesticides from golf courses, commercial landscape operations and structural pest control.

Why do obsolete pesticides exist?

Farmers and applicators can generate obsolete pesticides for a number of different reasons, including:

- They may have saved product one year and decided to use a new product the next year;
- A farmer may have leftover pesticides from previous years that has become de-registered and no longer legal for use;
- Farm ownership can change leaving the new owner with leftover product on site;
- Farmers may start growing different crops that require different pest control products than what they currently have; and
- Pest pressures can change from when farmers first purchase products leaving them with unusable products leftover.

How are obsolete products handled and destroyed after they have been returned?

All products are safely disposed using specialized high-temperature incineration, which is the most environmentally responsible disposal option. The incineration facility that CleanFARMS normally uses is approved by Environment Canada and is located in northern Alberta. It is a world-class facility developed and built specifically for the management of hazardous waste.

Obsolete pesticides returned during the collection process are safely packed in leak-proof containers and transported by a licensed and insured hazardous waste hauler. When properly packaged and handled by trained professionals, these products do not pose a health and safety risk.

What safety measures are in place to manage potential spills?

CleanFARMS and its contractors have very detailed emergency response plans in place to manage any accidents or spills that may occur. Since the program began in 1998, there have not been any spills or accidents.